

BUILDING BRIDGES

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read this morning a poem from Bill Bennett's book of virtues. It is entitled "The Bridge Builder."

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

(By Will Allen Dromgoole)

This poem speaks of each generation's responsibilities to its successors.

An old man, going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned, when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span the tide.
"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,

"There followeth after me today
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

Mr. Speaker, balancing the budget is not some mean-spirited accounting exercise. It is about preserving the American dream for future generations.

OUR FAILED WELFARE POLICIES OF THE PAST

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, the current welfare system is the \$600 toilet seat of social policy. In fact, it is worse. At least after spending \$600 on the proverbial toilet seat, we actually got one that did what it was supposed to do. You cannot say that about welfare.

We spend and we spend and we spend. Yet the problems we set out to solve 30 years ago have only gotten worse and worse and worse.

Illegitimacy and teen pregnancy have exploded, leaving in their wake drug abuse and crime. Family breakdown is a national crisis. Moral confusion and antisocial behavior is rampant.

Welfare has failed children more than anyone. Children on welfare do worse in school. They tend to have other developmental problems. They are three times more likely to end up on welfare themselves.

What a perverse and cruel form of compassion that encourages children to have children, and then condemns them to a dead end cycle of government dependency.

We could not consciously design a system that is more cruel to children which is what makes the liberals' defense of this current system all the more perplexing.

Hell hath no fury like a special interest masquerading as a moral principle.

GO AFTER THE CHEATS, NOT THE CHILDREN

(Mr. ROEMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the American people want us to fix the broken welfare system. There is too much fraud and abuse in it, especially in the Food Stamp Program. But they want us to go after the cheats, not the children.

A U.S.A. Today editorial the other day, not a Democrat or a Republican 1-minute speech, said this about the Republican proposal:

Today if people are thrown out of work by recession and their children's nutrition is jeopardized, Federal school lunch aid rises. The GOP plan erases that protection. It could divert up to 20 percent to other programs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, this welfare bill does an amazing thing, it unifies the Children's Defense Fund and the Right to Life Organization who both oppose this bill because it is extreme and it is coldhearted to our Nation's children.

HELP—I'VE FALLEN AND I CAN'T GET UP

(Ms. PRYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, help. I have fallen and I cannot get up.

For 5 million families, the average length of stay on welfare is 13 years. The Democrats have coated the social safety net with glue and millions of Americans are crying for help to become unstuck.

Republicans want the social safety net to be a trampoline off of which people can bounce to new heights.

We simply want to return this money to the State level where people can be helped the most. We don't cut it, we send it back.

Democrats do not trust the States. But it is these same Democrats who are standing in the doors of the Nations ghettos, refusing to let people out.

I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, "Get out of the door. Give people back their dignity by providing them with hope, independence, and opportunity." They want these for more than a handout.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, you know being a nurse you understand the importance of nutrition. It did not start with chil-

dren. Poor nutrition was recognized back during World War II when we found that our soldiers were not quite prepared and when they looked for the reason it was because they did not have proper nutrition. So it stands to reason if our soldiers were not prepared without proper nutrition our children simply cannot be. They cannot be healthy adults unless they have access to some nutrition as children.

We have heard that the nutrition programs for children will not be cut. I simply want to call our attention to this graph. If it is not going to be cut, then what does this mean? If it is going to be cut, this \$13.6 billion dollars, \$7 billion to bring it up to \$13.6 billion by the year 2000, when it should be \$15.9 billion, is that a cut with more and more children eligible for school nutrition?

We must look after the health of our children to have a healthy Nation. We are not asking for welfare for adults. We simply want attention being given to our children. Do not punish the children for what parents do not do.

THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT

(Mrs. FOWLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has spent \$5 trillion in the last 30 years creating a safety net for the needy. Unfortunately, that net has become more like a spider web—trapping the poor, destroying lives, and crushing hopes and dreams.

The Personal Responsibility Act is an attempt to create a welfare system that really works—a system that provides a helping hand but also encourages work and self-reliance. This bill increases money for WIC and school nutrition, provides more direct resources for child care and child protection services, and allows resources to go directly to the poor—not bureaucrats. And it will end the perverse incentives that drive illegitimacy, destroy families, and punish work.

The time has come for us to recognize that there is dignity in work—not dependency—and create a welfare system that provides a hand up rather than a hand-out. Vote for H.R. 4.

AN APOLOGY DUE WELFARE MOTHERS

(Ms. WATERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, this morning a Republican Member of this body, the gentleman from Florida, Mr. CLAY SHAW, was shown on national TV making a most irresponsible and outrageous statement disparaging welfare mothers by saying, and I quote, "You wouldn't leave your cat with them on the weekend."